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5 things to watch at Trump's second impeachment trial
From questions about trying a former president to whether conviction is a real possibility, the proceedings will be different than the first time.
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'Only just beginning'
Trump tries to recast legacy in farewell address.
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Trump team tries to milk the politics of food boxes
Policy advocates worry about the politicization of a critical taxpayer-funded program, while millions of children await billions in delayed nutrition aid.
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Matt Wuerker
The cartoonist's daily take on the world of politics.
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INAUGURATION DAY

EVAN VUCCI/AP

President-elect Joe Biden, his wife, Jill, Vice President-elect Kamala Harris and her husband, Doug Emhoff, on Tuesday attend a memorial to Americans killed in the pandemic at the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool.

Biden's inaugural speech won't unite the country. Here's what could.

Soaring pleas for unity won't work. Maybe concrete achievements will.

JOHN F. HARRIS

In his inaugural address Wednesday, Joe Biden will surely issue an appeal for unity — a plea that all Americans raise our sights and lower our voices, that we work together to restore faith in government, and in each other. And so on.

The words will be heard as sensible by any sensible person. Unless he somehow sought help from the wrong speechwriter, some passages will be downright eloquent.

And if history is any guide, the effective half-life of this rhetorical appeal will be measured in days or hours. It is not that exhortations for unity fall on deaf ears; it is that they fall on desensitized minds, even among people who say they want unity and may actually believe it.

In narrow political terms, Biden has a strong interest in taming the forces of remorseless conflict and

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McConnell aims to keep filibuster in Senate talks

The party leaders are still working to hash out an agreement to govern the 50-50 Senate

BY BURGESS EVERETT

Senate leaders Chuck Schumer and Mitch McConnell have yet to strike an agreement on how to run an evenly split Senate. And McConnell is driving a hard bargain.

In a letter to colleagues, McConnell indicated he wants a commitment from Schumer (D-N.Y.) to preserve the legislative filibuster as part of their agreement governing the rules of the 50-50 Senate. He said while he is taking his cues from the last split Senate in 2001, he also believes "we need to also address the threats to the legislative filibuster."

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ERIN SCOTT-POOL/GETTY IMAGES

Mitch McConnell and Chuck Schumer are discussing the status of the legislative filibuster. "It should be a reset moment for all of us," Sen. Richard Blumenthal said.

GOP takes on Biden's Cabinet, but without the Trumpian fury

BY MARIANNE LeVINE AND ANDREW DESIDERIO

Senate Republicans are ready to move on from the chaos of Donald Trump's presidency and revert to the ideological battle lines and policy disputes that previously characterized Washington.

Throughout a series of five back-to-back Cabinet confirmation hearings on Tuesday, Senate Republicans displayed a return-to-normal posture — staking out traditional conservative arguments and outlining their disagreements with the incoming Biden administration, but largely through a respectful back-and-forth with nominees.

It's a stark departure from the tumultuous, freewheeling Cabinet fights that defined the Trump era. And it suggests that Joe Biden, a longtime creature of the Senate, has at least a chance of success in his bid to work with the GOP. Top Republicans signaled their interest in quickly confirming his intelligence chief, Treasury secretary and Homeland Security secretary.

"I think it's very, very important that we have a secretary of Homeland Security in place as soon as

CABINET on page 11

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